tree bark

Tree Bark
by Breean Elyse Miller

I was inspired by the mature trees that are growing throughout the city of Chicago. They are too big to wrap your arms around, yet they spring out of sidewalks down many streets in Lakeview. They seem so out of place amongst the cars and concrete, and they bring a kind of serene beauty and calmness to the neighborhoods. This reversible hat mimics the patterns of tree bark. It makes a beautiful design worn either way, and would also be suitable for women or men. The smocking pattern creates a distinct cable look on one side and an interesting rib pattern on the other.

SIZE
One, but this can be modified by changing yarn gauge. The two types of yarn I used result in two different sized hats.

FINISHED MEASUREMENTS
Brown Version: 8.5 inches unstretched at the brim; 8 inches from cast on edge to crown.
Purple Version: 9 inches unstretched at the brim; 8.5 inches from cast on edge to crown.

MATERIALS:
Brown Version: Jo Sharp Silkroad Ultra [85% wool, 10% silk, 5% cashmere; 60yd/55m per 1.75oz ball]; 712: Truffle; 2 balls.
Purple Version: Malabrigo Chunky [100% Merino wool; 104yd per 3.5oz skein]; 68: Violetas; 1 skein.

1 16 inch US #8/5mm circular needle
1 set US #8/5mm douple-point needles

1 cable needle
1 small tapestry needle
1 stitch marker

GAUGE
Brown Version: 15 sts/21 rows = 4" in stockinette stitch
Purple Version: 16 sts/ 20 rows = 4" in stockinette stitch

PATTERN NOTES
Carefully weave in ends for this hat because it becomes reversible. When working the second smocking row, you will notice you will have to use stitches after the beginning of the next round to complete the smocking pattern- this is intended.

Smock 5: place next 5 stitches onto a cable needle and hold to front of work, wrap yarn around the stitches on the cn twice counterclockwise (making sure to wrap firmly, but not too tight as you might create gaps in the fabric), then work the stitches on the cable needle (k1, p3, k1).

Smock 4: place next 4 stitches onto a cable needle and hold to front of work, wrap yarn around the stitches twice counterclockwise, then work the stitches on the cable needle (k1, p2tog, k1). This round is decreasing within the smocking.

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PATTERN
Cast on 78 stitches with your circular needle, place marker, and join to work in the round, making sure not to twist your stitches.

Work in rounds of*k2, p1* ribbing for 2 inches. On last ribbing round, work kfb in both of the last two knit stitches of the round (increasing by 2 stitches, so you now have 80 stitches total).

Begin Smocking Pattern
Rounds 1-2: p1, k1, *p3, k1*, repeat between ** until last 2 sts, p2.
Round 3: p1, *smock 5, p3*, repeat between ** until last 7 sts, smock 5, p2.
Rounds 4-8: Work as stitches appear (knit the knits, purl the purls).
Round 9: p1, k1, *p3, smock 5*, repeat between **. This will extend into the next round by two stitches, which is intended.
Rounds 10-14: Work as stitches appear.

Repeat rounds 3-14 once more. The hat should now measure approx 6-6.5 inches from the cast on edge.

Crown Decrease Rounds
Round 1: In this round you will work one p2tog decrease in each smock section. First round is as follows: p1, *smock 5 (work as k1, p2tog, p1, k1), p3*, repeat between ** until last 2 sts, p2.
Rounds 2-3: p1, *k1, p2, k1, p3*, repeat between ** until last 6 sts, [k1, p2] twice.
Round 4: p1, *k1, p2, k1, p2tog, p1*, repeat between ** until last 6 sts, k1, p2, k1, p2tog.
Rounds 5-6: p1, *k1, p2*, repeat between ** to last 2 sts, k1, p1.
Round 7: p1, k1, *p2, smock 4 (work as k1, p2tog, k1)*, repeat between ** around. Move stitch marker after knit stitch on last smock to mark new beginning of round.
Round 8: *p2tog, k1, p1, k1*, repeat between ** around.
Round 9: Switch to douple-points. *p1, k2tog, k1*, repeat between** around.
Round 10: *p1, k2tog*, repeat between ** around.
Rounds 11-12: k2tog around.

Finishing
Cut a 6 inch tail and thread through remaining stitches with the tapestry needle. Weave in ends carefully and block if desired.

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ABOUT THE DESIGNER
Breean has been experimenting with knitting for over 6 years. She works at a yarn shop in Chicago in order to support her yarn habit and lives with her boyfriend of many years. Breean is beginning graduate school this fall and hopes to have a yarn shop of her own one day. You can find her at http://breeanelyse.blogspot.com and her Ravelry name is breeanelyse.